

Agencies and other agricultural and water entities. Rex has been awarded numerous personal citations as well.

Madam Speaker, Rex leaves Ventura County's agricultural industry strong. I know my colleagues will join me in thanking him for his many years of dedicated service and in wishing him a long and fruitful retirement with his wife, Susan; and many years of enjoyment with their sons, Sean and Kevin; and their five grandchildren.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHN  
PLAYTER'S SERVICE AS A  
WORLD WAR II VETERAN AND  
POW

### HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 19, 2008*

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and say thank you to a true American hero—and Missouri native. John Playter might not be a household name for many, but his service to our country during World War II certainly earns him a leading role in America's Greatest Generation.

Mr. Playter was called to duty in 1941 and served as an artillery officer before being taken prisoner with thousands of other U.S. servicemen after the fall of Bataan. His story of survival—through death marches and labor camps—in the Philippine jungles as an American soldier and a prisoner of war is extraordinary and nothing short of inspiring.

After more than two years in Japanese captivity, Mr. Playter regained his freedom only after the Japanese prisoner ship Shinyo Maru sank while transporting 730 Americans. Again defying the odds, John was one of only 83 survivors to be rescued by an American submarine.

When returning to Missouri, Mr. Playter met a young woman named Charlene at the O'Reilly General Hospital in Springfield where he recovered from injuries sustained during his captivity. John married Charlene and spent the next 38 years of his life with her at his side.

Staying true to his roots, Mr. Playter worked 25 years as the city engineer for the City of Bolivar. And, along the way, published his memoir, *Survivor*. His personal telling of this powerful story describes the service, faith and triumph of John and his brave colleagues.

The Bolivar Rotary Club will honor Mr. Playter for his service to his country, community and more than 50 years of service as a Rotarian this 4th of July when they name a three-acre park in his honor during their annual "Celebration of Freedom." John's life is an inspiration to everyone and one that deserves this long overdue honor. I'd like to publicly thank Mr. Playter for his dedicated service to his Nation and community.

CONGRATULATING JORGE URBINA,  
RECIPIENT OF THE PEACE  
CORPS FRANKLIN H. WILLIAMS  
AWARD

### HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 19, 2008*

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jorge Urbina on being awarded the Peace Corps Franklin H. Williams Award. This award celebrates the ongoing civic contributions of returned volunteers, and is intended to recognize the efforts of those who, like Mr. Urbina, have worked tirelessly to better their communities at home. Mr. Urbina will receive the award tonight, in a ceremony to be held here in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Urbina is currently the President of the Denton Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, a position he has held since 2001. His law practice, Urbina Law and Title, has consistently been committed to diversity in the workplace and involvement in the community. In recognition of his firm's outstanding work, Mr. Urbina was recently named the Small Business Administration's Minority Small Business Champion of the Year. In addition, Mr. Urbina is vice president of the Denton assistance center, a grassroots movement to build a common facility to house a collection of non-profit organizations in the area. He also recently resigned his position on the board of Interfaith Ministries of Denton, after serving for the maximum 12-year term. Mr. Urbina and his wife, Patty, have three children: David, age 21, Thomas, recently graduated from high school, and Susana, age 12.

Established in 1999, the Franklin H. Williams Award pays tribute to returned Peace Corps Volunteers of color who continue the Peace Corps mission through their commitment to community service, and who support the agency's third goal of promoting a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

I commend Mr. Urbina for the work of his outstanding legal practice, and also for his special involvement in the local community. The award he receives today is well deserved, and I am proud to represent him in the 26th District of Texas.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 19, 2008*

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Speaker, I was detained while attempting to reach the House floor to cast my vote on rollcall No. 415 on June 17, 2008. Had I been able to reach the floor before the vote was closed, I would have voted "yea."

H. CON. RES. 318, SUPPORTING THE  
GOALS AND IDEALS OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SANI-  
TATION

### HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 19, 2008*

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 318, a resolution to support the goals and ideals of the International Year of Sanitation and to help raise awareness of the importance of sanitation and safe drinking water.

This resolution recognizes the importance of sanitation on public health, poverty reduction, economic and social development, and the environment. In 2000, the United States and other world leaders committed themselves to combat poverty, hunger, and disease through the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). One target is to halve the number of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015.

Today more than 1 billion people live without safe drinking water and an estimated 2.6 billion people worldwide go without proper sanitation. This lack of access contributes to the deaths of an estimated 1.5 million children each year. Clean water and sanitation are necessary to fight disease and reduce child and maternal mortality. Without it, more children will be sick, more children will forgo schooling, and more will lose their lives to disease.

The absence of basic water and sanitation services is particularly difficult for girls. In communities that lack these services, young girls often bear the burden of water collection leaving them little time or energy for school. Those who do make it to school find that only half all the world's schools have access to clean drinking water and adequate sanitation—estimates show half the girls in Sub-Saharan Africa who drop out of primary school do so because of poor water and sanitation facilities. That is why investments in clean water and sanitation are essential to achieving universal education. A school sanitation program in Bangladesh helped increase the number of girls enrolling by 11 percent.

Expanding access to clean water and basic sanitation is one of our best strategies for improving the health and prosperity of entire communities and it is a necessary step toward achieving all of the MDGs. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this resolution and to renew their commitment to improving access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation to help people live more productive and healthy lives.

TO SUPPORT THE GOALS OF THE  
THIRD ANNUAL NATIONAL DUMP  
THE PUMP DAY

### HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 19, 2008*

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of an innovative approach to increasing use on our Nation's public transportation network. Today, June 19, Americans